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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/NCE, IO/UNESCO JANE COWLEY

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SUBJECT: CZECH REPUBLIC SUPPORTS ADOPTING UNESCO CONVENTION
AS IS

REF: STATE 170909

1. (U) SUMMARY. The GOCR plans to fall in line with the EU in support of adopting the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Expressions in October 2005 without further negotiation. The Czechs candidly advised Emboffs that a high level call from the State Department will not change the Czech position. They urged the USG to focus its efforts instead on the implementation of the Convention. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) Econoff and Poloff met on September 21 with Mr. Karel Komarek and Ms. Ivana Grollova of the MFA,s UNESCO Commission and UN Department respectively, and provided reftel non-paper and talking points. Komarek said that the GOCR understood the US position well, and noted that the GOCR has not been active on this issue. The GOCR will not stand in the way of the draft Convention because it has been negotiated extensively, and the majority of member countries support this draft. Indeed, the Czechs, along with the rest of the EU member states, are sponsors of the Canadian Resolution, which states that the draft Convention should be adopted in October.

3. (U) Komarek agreed that the language in the Convention could be improved, but further changes to the text would be pointless because countries so inclined will violate human rights or existing treaties regardless of the Convention. A high level call from the State Department, while not harmful, would not influence the Czech,s position. Instead, he urged the US to focus its efforts on the terms of the implementation of the Convention.

4. (SBU) COMMENT: Post believes Komarek's comments are valid; the Czechs are not going to engage on this issue. They are taking a pragmatic approach because they believe this Convention will be adopted. Komarek informally commented that he knows the language is not ideal, but given the complexities and the amount of time already devoted to negotiating this text, the member countries are highly unlikely to re-work the text.

DODMAN